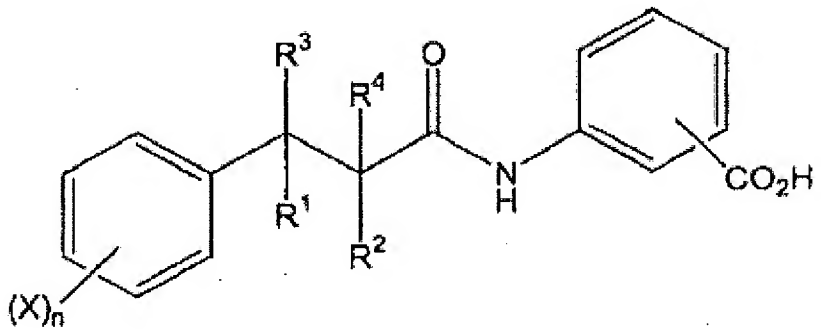
LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. (original) A method of downregulating microglial cell functional activity, said method comprising contacting said cell with an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4 alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4 alkyl group or a C_1-C_4 alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to inhibit, retard or otherwise downregulate iNOS expression.

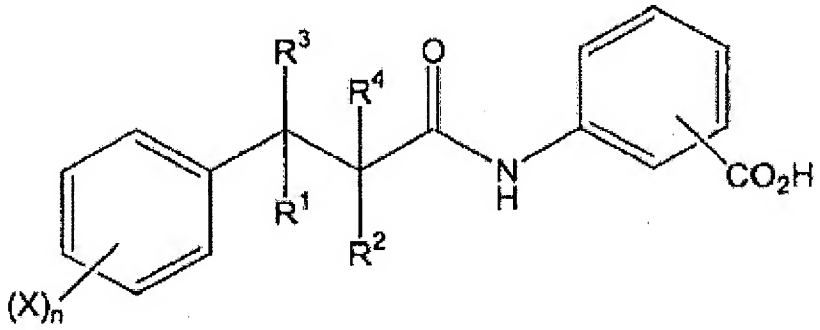
2. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2 wherein said nitric acid synthesis is inflammatory cytokine induced nitric oxide synthesis.

4. (original) The method according to claim 3 wherein said cytokine is interferon-γ.

5. (original) The method according to claim 2 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is lipopolysaccharide-induced nitric oxide synthesis.

6. (original) A method of downregulating microglial cell functional activity in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4 alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4 alkyl group or a C_1-C_4 alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to inhibit, retard or otherwise downregulate iNOS expression.

7. (original) The method according to claim 6 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

8. (original) The method according to claim 7 wherein said nitric acid synthesis is inflammatory cytokine induced nitric oxide synthesis.

9. (original) The method according to claim 8 wherein said cytokine is interferon-γ.

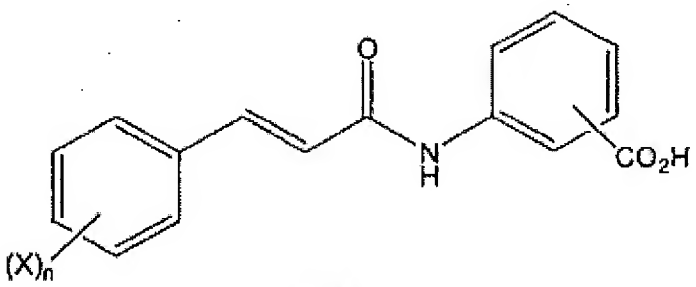
10. (original) The method according to claim 7 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is lipopolysaccharide-induced nitric oxide synthesis.

11. (original) The method according to any one of claims 1-10 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least one of R^1 and R^2 is hydrogen

atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together form a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C1-C4 alkyl or C1- C4alkoxy.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both or R1and R2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1–C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1 –C4alkoxy.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

14. (original) The method of claim 13 wherein said compound is selected from the list:
2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;

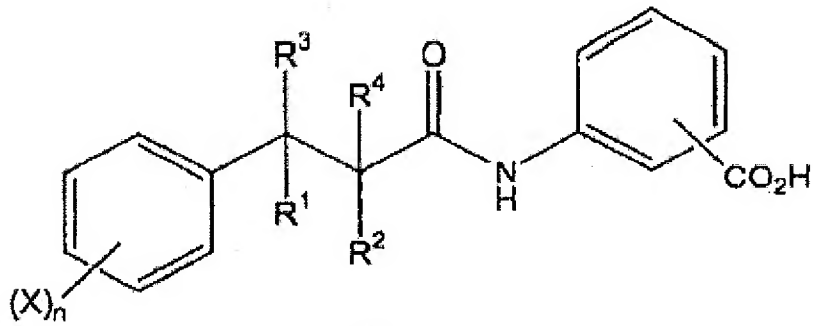
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;

15. (original) The method according to claim 14 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

16-25 (canceled)

26. (original) A method for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of a condition characterized by aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate microglial cell functional activity in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4 alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4alkyl group or a C_1-C_4alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected

together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to inhibit, retard or otherwise downregulate iNOS expression.

27. (original) The method according to claim 26 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

28 (original) The method according to claim 27 wherein said aberrant nitric oxide synthesis is overproduction of nitric oxide.

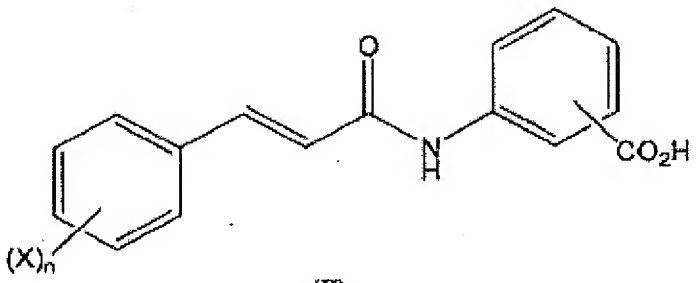
29. (original) The method according to claim 28 wherein said condition is nitric oxide induced neuronal damage.

30. (original) The method according to claim 28 wherein said neuronal damage is brain ischaemia, Parkinson's disease, AIDS dementia. Alzheimer's disease, oligodendrocyte cytotoxicity, demyelination in multiple sclerosis or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

31. (original) The method according to any one of claims 26-30 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least on of R^1 and R^2 is a hydrogen atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together from a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C_1-C_4 alkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxy.

32. (original) The method of claim 31 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both or R^1 and R^2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1–C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1 –C4alkoxy.

33. (original) The method according to claim 32 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

34. (original) The method of claim 33 wherein said compound is selected from the list:

2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methyenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propeny1]amino]benzoic acid;

35. (original) The method according to claim 34 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

36-42. (canceled)